

Tools for Re-Engaging Your Watershed Organization



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Mid Atlantic Volunteer
Monitoring Conference
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Dickinson

Presentation

- ALLARM background
- Self reflection exercise
- Strategic Planning
- Self reflection exercise
- Volunteer retention



Who we are

- Project of the environmental studies department (1986)
- 3 full time directors
- 1 science advisor/Dickinson faculty member
- 10 – 14 students



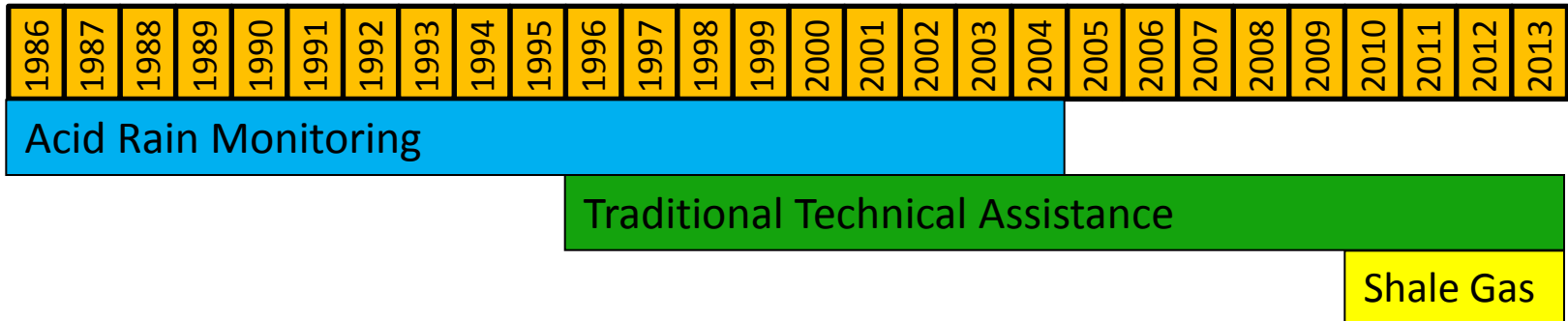
ALLARM Background

Empower communities with scientific tools to monitor, protect, and restore PA streams.



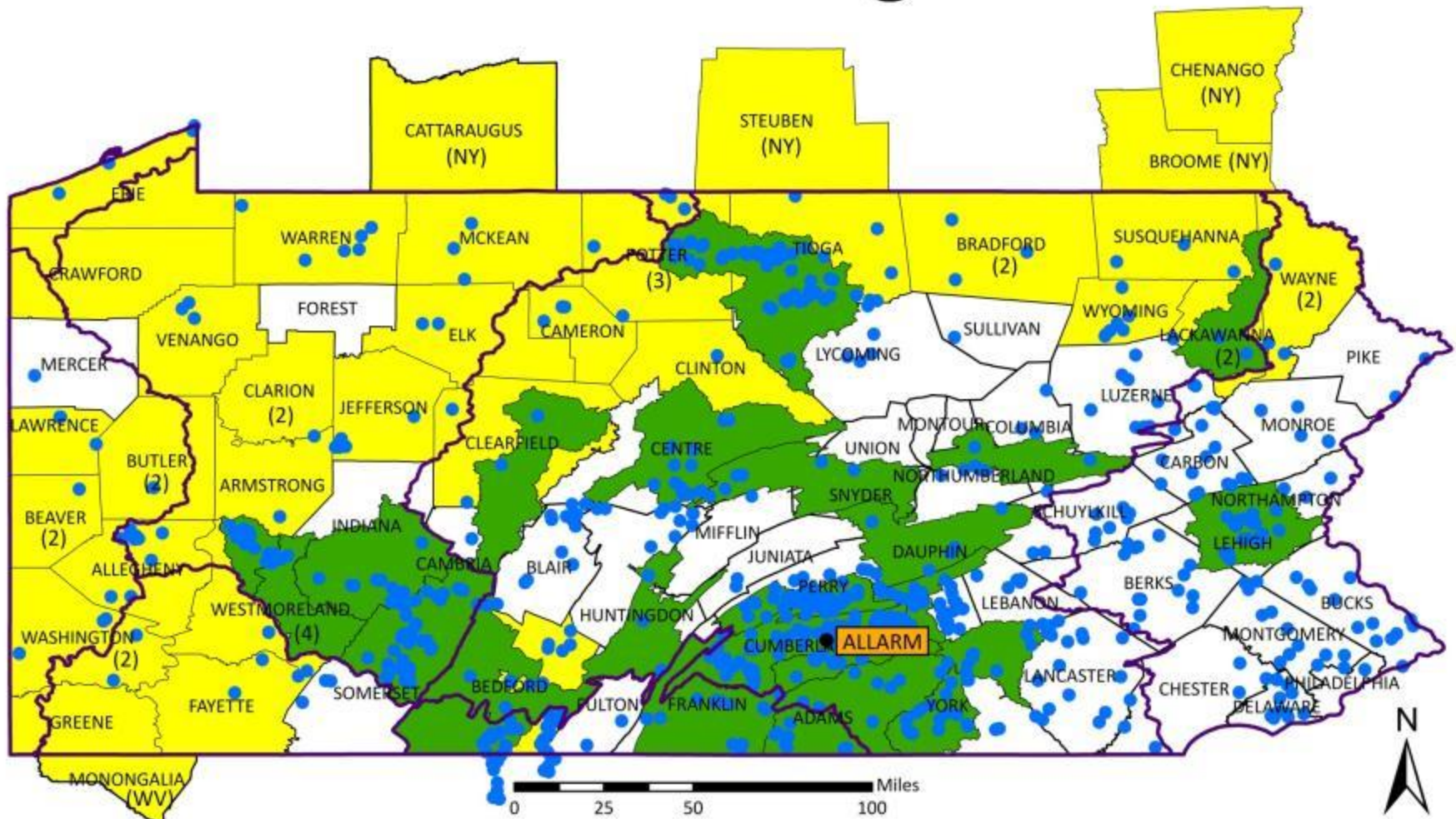
Educate. Engage. Empower.

ALLARM History



Monitoring Program	Region	Volunteers	Outreach
Acid Rain	Statewide	Individuals	Minimal
Traditional TA	Southcentral PA	Groups	Intensive
Shale Gas	Marcellus & Utica	Groups & Individuals	Regular

ALLARM Monitoring Assistance



Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring
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January 2013

- Acid Rain Sites
- Traditional Technical Assistance
- Shale Gas
- 6 Major PA Watersheds

Data Sources: ALLARM, NYS Office of Cyber Security, PA DOT, PSU, USGS, WVDEP

Volunteer Monitoring

- Citizens involved in data collection
- US: 1890s-2010



NJ Watershed Watch Network

TEXAS STREAM TEAM



Why programmatic support?

- Cycle of volunteerism
- Strategic planning
- Volunteer recruitment and retention



Self-reflection

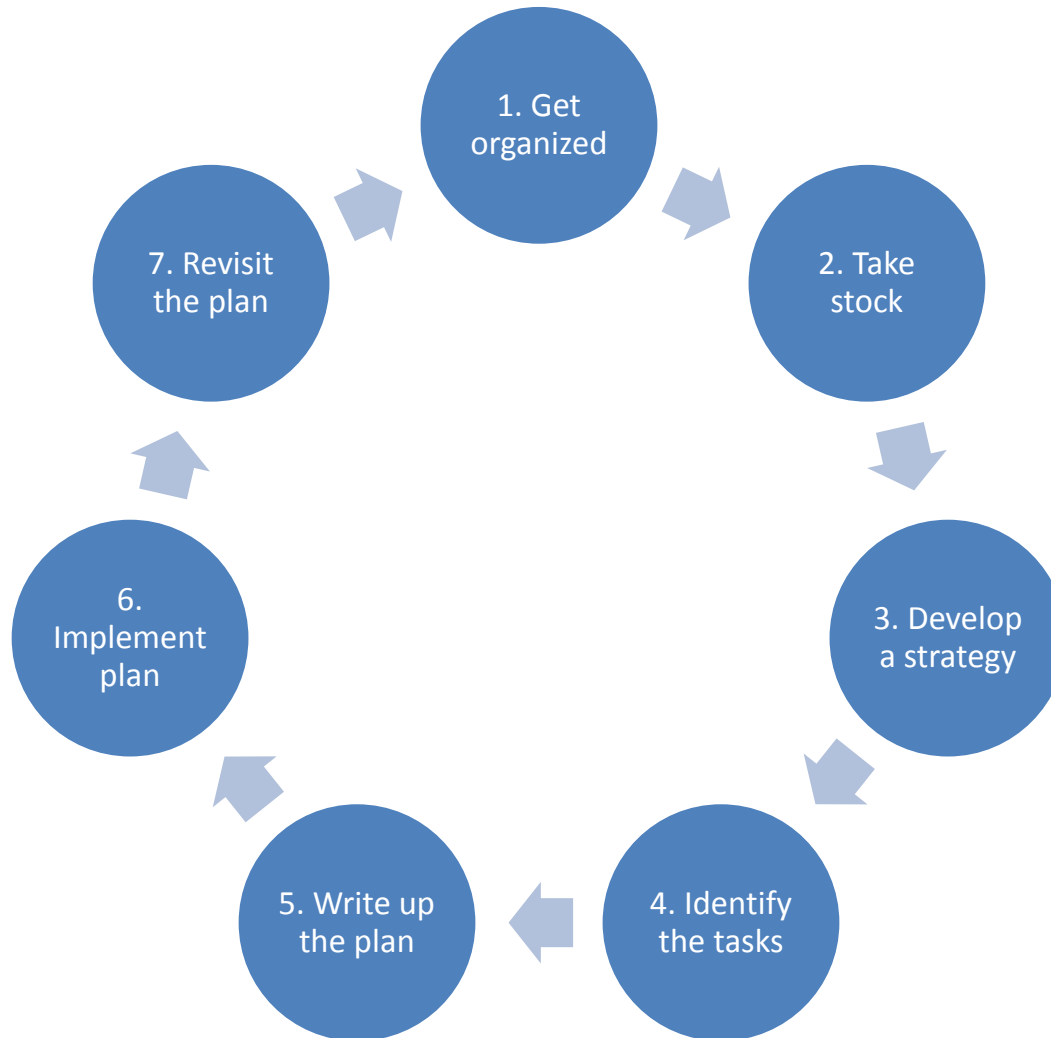


Strategic Planning

- Where is your organization going?
- How is it going to get there?
- Who is going to do the work?
- How will you know if you have achieved your goals?



Strategic Planning Steps



Very important to collect data!

- Board
- Volunteers
- Stakeholders/Partners
- Fringe organizations
- Tools:
 - Google Forms
 - Survey Monkey

Watershed Alliance of York: Strategic Planning Survey

As we discussed during our January 9 meeting, we are at the stage in our strategic planning process to make decisions about WAY's future and priority programs. As you are answering questions, think about your personal commitment to WAY and what you are realistically able to offer the organization as a board member.

Please note: Responses will be kept confidential, I (Julie) will compile responses for the group omitting names.

*** Required**

Name (first & last) *
This is to help me track responses.

What do see as the mission and function of WAY in the community? *
In your own words.

What advances WAY's mission in the community? *

Listen to and use data!

- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Opinion on successful programs
- What current issues should be tackled
- Identify key program areas/projects



Strategic Planning Outcomes

- 3-5 year plan
- Manageable projects
 - Resources
- Approachable projects
 - New volunteers
 - Outreach



Successful strategic planning process tools

- External facilitator (not afraid to ask difficult answers)
- Representative subcommittee
 - Leadership
 - Subcommittees
 - New and Old volunteers
- Data, data, data
- 3-5 road map



Self-reflection



Reasons why people volunteer

- Benefit family or self
- Help a cause you believe in
- Do something you like to do
- Feel sense of accomplishment
- Meet people and find new friends
- Find challenge in new skills and experiences
- Gain work experience



Volunteer Recruitment

1. Know your organization
2. Know what you want
 - a) Skills
 - b) Time frames
3. Develop recruitment resources
4. Design a recruitment strategy
 - a) Advertising – print, online, media
 - b) Reach out to partners
5. Manage your volunteers



Recruitment

- Newspapers/newsletter
- Social media
- Community organizations
- Community centers
- Public fairs/events



Get to know your volunteers!

- Organization orientation
- Ask about their motivation
- Survey skill sets
- Ask what they would like to get out of volunteering
- Open two-way communication



Managing volunteers

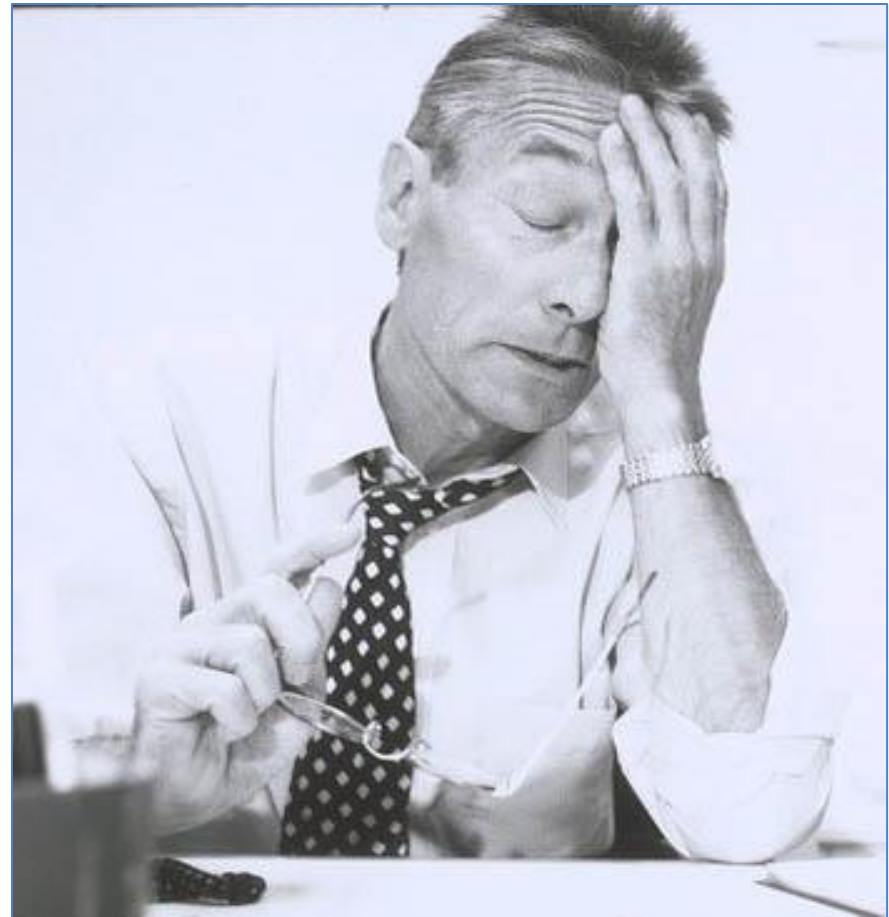
- Volunteer coordinator
- Job descriptions
- Clear start and end points
- Care and feeding
- Opportunities for feedback

Service Position Title:	
Service Location:	
Service Impact:	
Immediate Supervisor/Title:	
Service Position Summary:	



Reasons for burnout

- Voice and role ambiguity
 - Make sure volunteers play a role in decisions that affect them
 - Make sure volunteers have a clear sense of what they are signing up to do – job description



Retention

- Change it up
- Provide leadership opportunities
- Effective feedback
- Recognition



Tips for acknowledging volunteers

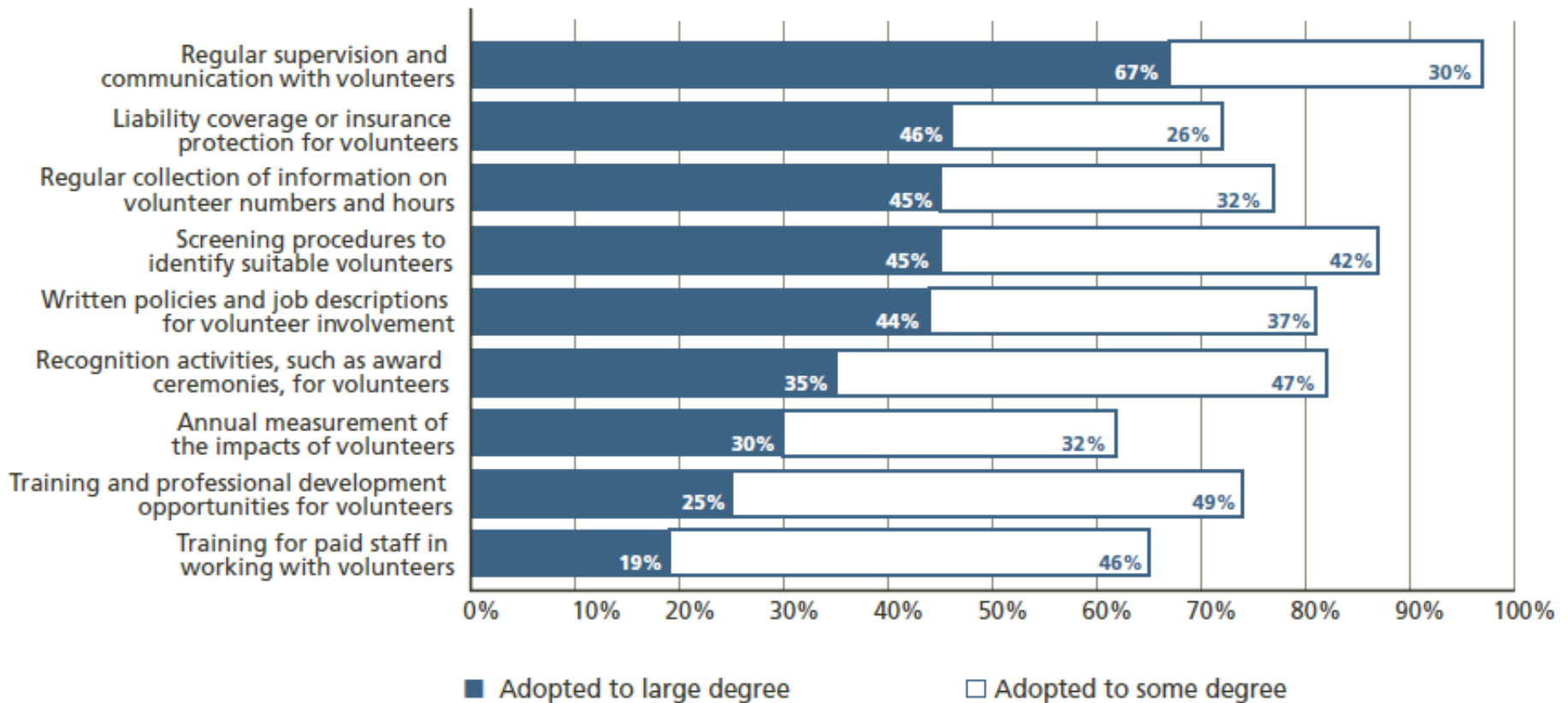
- 6 month check in
- Celebrate anniversaries
- Annual volunteer celebration
- Coordinator check-ins
 - Re-evaluate commitment
 - Identify new interests and goals
- Creative appreciation ideas?



Study by The Urban Institute

www.urban.org

Figure 1: Management Practices that Charities Say They Practice to a Large Degree or to Some Degree



Resources

- *Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations*, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1997
- www.urban.org “Volunteer Management Practices and Retention of Volunteers”
- http://www.nps.gov/nero/rtcatoobox/org_volunteers.htm
- www.usawaterquality.org/volunteer